

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 024979

FOR MOOSE AND KEOGH

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO DAR ES SALAAM GABORONE MAPUTO
LAGOS LUSAKA BONN LONDON OTTAWA PRETORIA PARIS USUN
NEW YORK FROM CAPE TOWN DTD 28 JAN 1978 QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0134

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, SF, WA, UN

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: PREPARING SWAPO FOR THE PROXIMITY TALKS

REF: STATE 20710,

1. FOLLOWING ARE OUR IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS IN RESPONSE TO
THE QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN REFTEL:

MITIGATING EFFECT OF SAG RESIDUAL PRESSURE

2. SWAPO, LIKE SOUTH AFRICA, IS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH
THE POLITICAL RATHER THAN THE MILITARY IMPLICATIONS OF A
SAG RESIDUAL FORCE PRESENCE. THE CONTACT GROUP'S PROPOSAL
WOULD SEEM TO REDUCE THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF THIS
PRESENCE TO A LOW LEVEL BUT SOME ELABORATION OF THE CONDITIONS
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COULD POSSIBLY MAKE IT MORE PALATABLE TO SWAPO. THE OBJECTIVE
SHOULD BE TO MITIGATE THE IMPRESSION ON THE POPULATION THAT THE
RESIDUAL PRESENCE REFLECTS ON-GOING SAG AUTHORITY AND TO HIGHLIGHT
THE AUTHORITY OF THE UN. WE MIGHT FOR EXAMPLE ASSURE SWAPO THAT:

--UN OBSERVER TEAMS WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO BOTH OSHIVELLO AND
GROOTFONTEIN;

--SWAPO LIAISON OFFICERS WOULD BE ASSIGNED TO EACH TEAM
(LIKEWISE, A SAG LIAISON OFFICER WOULD HAVE TO BE ASSIGNED TO
ANY UN OBSERVER TEAMS IN SWAPO BASES IN ANGOLA.);

--IN ADDITION, A PROMINENT UN CHECKPOINT FLYING THE UN FLAG
WOULD BE ESTABLISHED OUTSIDE THE GATES OF EACH OF THESE BASES.
(THIS COULD HAVE PARTICULAR PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT AT OSHIVELLO
WHICH LIES OFF THE ONLY PAVED AND MUCH-TRAVELLED ROAD BETWEEN
OVAMBO AND THE REST OF NAMIBIA.);

--THE OVAMBO BORDER CHECKPOINT AT OSHIVELLO, LOCATED ABOUT
ONE HALF MILE DOWN THE ROAD FROM OSHIVELLO CAMP, WOULD BECOME
A MAJOR UN MONITORING POST PRIMINENTLY DISPLAYING A UN PRESENCE
IN THE AREA ADJACENT TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN RESIDEUAL FORCE
ENCAMPMENT. (THE LATTER IS LOCATED ABOUT ONE MILE OFF THE MAIN
ROAD WHEREAS THE BORDER CHECKPOINT IS IMMEDIATELY ON THE HIGHWAY.);

--ALTHOUGH SOUTH AFRICAN FLAGS WOULD CONTINUE TO FLY AT
OSHIVELLO AND GROOTFONTEIN, US FLAGS WOULD ALSO BE HOISTED INSIDE
THESE BASES BUT NOT SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN FLAG;

--ANY SUPPLY CONVOYS BETWEEN THESE TWO BASES OR BETWEEN THEM
AND SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY UN JEEPS; NO SOUTH
AFRICAN FLAGS OR MILITARY PERSONNEL WITH WEAPONS WOULD BE PER-
MITTED ON THESE CONVOYS;
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--SOUTH AFRICAN PERSONNEL AT THESE BASES WOULD NOT BE
ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE BASE AREA EXCEPT THOSE RESIDING IN OFF-BASE
FAMILY QUARTERS AT GROOTFONTEIN;

--ALL SADF FLIGHTS INTO AND OUT OF GROOTFONTEIN WOULD BE
CAREFULLY MONITORED AND LIMITED TO ESSENTIAL SUPPLY MISSIONS;

--LIKEWISE ALL RAIL TRAFFIC INTO GROOTFONTIEN WOULD BE
CAREFULLY MONITORED AND LIMITED TO ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES;

--(IF THE SUBJECT OF WALVIS BAY IN TERMS OF SAG PRESENCE IN
NAMIBIA IS RAISED BY SWAPO) ALL RAIL, ROAD AND AIR TRAFFIC
THROUGH NAMIBIA INTO WALVIS BAY WOULD BE CAREFULLY SCREENED.
NO MILITARY SUPPLIES OR TRAFFIC INTO WALVIS BAY WOULD BE
ALLOWED BY ROAD OR RAIL EXCEPT FOR FOODSTUFFS WHICH WOULD BE
TRANSPORTED IN CIVILIAN CARRIERS.

PROSEPCTIVE SIZE OF UN AND SAG FORCES

3. IT WOULD HELP TO REASSURE SWAPO IF WE COULD INDICATE
THAT THE UN FORCE INSIDE NAMIBIA WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY
LARGER THAN THE SAG FORCE. NAUTRALLY, SWAPO WILL NOT CONSIDER

ANY UN FORCES IN ANGOLA AS OFFSETTING SAG PRESENCE IN NAMIBIA. IT SHOULD IN ANY EVENT BE POINTED OUT TO SWAPO THAT UNDER THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSAL EVEN THE PRESENCE OF A UN MILITARY FORCE OF LESS THAN 1500 WOULD BE HIGHLY VISIBLE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AND ESPECIALLY AT OVAMBO, WHILE THE SADF WILL BE STRICTLY CONFINED TO TWO BASES.

4. ALTHOUGH PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH THE POLITICAL ASPECTS, SWAPO WILL PROBABLY EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF SAG RESIDUAL FORCES TO REASSERT CONTROL AND DECIMATE SWAPO'S UNARMED POLITICAL STRUCTURE SHOULD THE TRANSITION PROCESS BREAK DOWN. IN RESPONSE, WE SHOULD NOTE THE CAPABILITY IN ANY EVENT OF THE SAG TO MOVE FORCES RAPIDLY FROM SOUTH AFRICA IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THAT OBJECTIVE IF THEY
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WISHED. WE SHOULD STRESS TO SWAPO, HOWEVER, THE ENORMOUS RISKS FOR THE SAG IN PURSUING SUCH A COURSE UNLESS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COLLAPSE OF THE AGREEMENT CLEARLY DID NOT REST ON THEIR SHOULDERS. IT WOULD BE MORE DIRECTLY HELPFUL IN ALLEVIATING SWAPO CONCERNS IF THE WESTERN FIVE COULD FORMULATE A STATEMENT SETTING OUT IN THE STRONGEST LANGUAGE POSSIBLE A COMMITMENT TO TAKE STRONG ACTION IN RESPONSE TO ANY UNPROVOKED USE OF FORCE THAT WOULD BREAK THE AGREEMENT ONCE IT WAS IN EFFECT.

RELEASE OF SWAPO DISSIDENTS

5. IF SWAPO IS READY TO SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATE THE OPTION OF A FREE AND IMPARTIAL ELECTION, THE RELEASE OF ITS DISSIDENTS COULD BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR IT TO ACCEPT THAN THE RESIDUAL PRESENCE OF 1500 SAG TROOPS. SWAPO, WITH REASON, WOULD FEAR THAT THE SHIPANGA GROUP, IF ALLOWED TO RETURN, COULD SPLIT THE OVAMBO VOTE. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE AWARE OF THIS SITUATION AND EVEN IF THEY SHOULD MAKE A MAJOR CONCESSION ON THE TROOP PRESENCE ISSUE, THEY WILL VERY LIKELY INSIST ON THE RELEASE OF THE SWAPO-HELD DISSIDENTS. WE COULD MITIGATE THE PROBLEM FOR SWAPO SLIGHTLY BY INCLUDING A PROVISION THAT ALL DETAINEES AND POLITICAL PRISONERS SHOULD BY A SET DATE BE SENT TO A THIRD COUNTRY FOR PROCESSING BY THE UN COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES. THIS WOULD ALLOW SOME DELAY BETWEEN ACTUAL RELEASE AND RETURN TO NAMIBIA. OTHER THAN THIS LIMITED MOVE, WE SEE NO WAY TO SATISFY NUJOMA ON THIS ISSUE WITHOUT COMPROMISING OUR COMMITMENT TO THE RETURN OF ALL NAMIBIANS WHO WISH TO DO SO TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTION.

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DISSEMINATION OF SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS TO SWAPO LEADERS

6. THE ONLY WAY, IT APPEARS, TO ENSURE THAT THE PROPOSAL IS KNOWN TO A WIDE RANGE OF SWAPO LEADERS IS TO PUBLISH IT. PUBLICATION, WE BELIEVE, IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO BRING PRESSURE ON NUJOMA FROM WITHIN SWAPO AND NAMIBIA. CAPE TOWN 0135 CONTAINS OUR RECOMMENDATION FOR EARLY PUBLICATION. IN PREVIOUS MESSAGES WE HAVE SUGGESTED THE MECHANICS AND THE AUDIENCES FOR THE BRIEFINGS WE MIGHT PROVIDE IN NAMIBIA. BOWDLER UNQTE VANCE

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